



For immediate use

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## **You're hired! Council in search for new apprentices**

West Oxfordshire District Council is searching for new apprentices to join its workforce and gain on-the-job training and qualifications.

The Council is looking for two enthusiastic individuals to join its Revenues and Benefits Service to train as apprentices over the next two years.

The apprentices will help to deal with claims for Housing and Council Tax Benefit, working within a busy environment while gaining skills to help them on the path to gaining a long-term career.

The search for the new apprentices is on following a successful scheme piloted in 2009, which saw the Council employ three Revenues and Benefits apprentices using Government funding. These apprentices are now close to completing their training and gaining qualifications to help them potentially apply for jobs within the Council or elsewhere.

The application process for the new apprentices is now under way and the successful candidates will be in post from the end of September. Both will have the chance to gain a vocational qualification in Revenues and Benefits equivalent to a Level-3 NVQ, or two A-Levels.

Cllr Simon Hoare, Cabinet Member for Resources, said: "We are extremely pleased to be extending the apprenticeship scheme to offer more local people the chance of gaining quality training and qualifications. Apprenticeship schemes offer a good alternative to university or college courses and can help people onto a promising career path.

"This is especially important at a time when the employment market is so difficult, particularly for young people. The Council enjoyed its Alan Sugar moment two years ago when we launched the pilot and we are once again looking forward to sifting through the applicants and being able to say 'You're hired' to two promising candidates."

Richard Jones, 20, of Witney, was among the three apprentices employed by the Council in 2009. He will complete his training within the next two months and is hoping to secure a job within the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service.

He said: "I went to college to study music technology when I left school and spent a year searching for a job before I saw the apprenticeship advertised with the Council. I'm really glad I applied; it's been varied and I've learned lots of new, valuable skills that will help me to develop a career. I never had that chance before and I would really recommend the apprenticeship scheme to anyone else who wants this kind of opportunity."

**The closing date for applications is 2 September 2011.**

To find out how to apply visit the Council's website [www.westoxon.gov.uk/jobs](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/jobs) or call 01993 861515.

**ENDS**

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